

endings, reduces local hyperemia reflexly, and facilitates the removal of secretions by direct physical action, and, therefore, is not merely an inert deodorant and placebo.

Heubner, W.: Arch. exp. Path. Pharm., 1923, 96:330; "Menthol als Beispiel eines erregenden Giftes."

McGuigan, H.: J. Am. Med. Assoc., 1921, 76:303, "Menthol and Peppermint in Acute Catarrhal Conditions of the Respiratory Tract."

### MEDICAL FICTION

The cause of scientific medicine is being injured by what may be appropriately termed medical fiction. It is not called that to be sure, but it finds its origin in the same sort of fanciful dreams. It is promulgated in the same breezy style, and it is motivated by the same underlying principles. Like some other fiction, it plays with perverted truths, twisted half-truths, or more often, it is the creature of the imagination. Like some other fiction, too, it utilizes old and substantiated scientific knowledge; old and obsolete and long since disproved theories, or even the meanderings of the medical theorists of other days, and by dressing them with new verbiage, promulgates them as new contributions to science.

If most of these modern medical—including public health—fiction writers had the true novelist's instincts and the facility to write well, they would do incalculable harm. Even their choices of subjects is held in fairly narrow fields. One of their favorite sports is to launch an attack upon the family physician. They attack his inadequate education, his craftsmanship, and even his integrity. They seem to think that he is only fit to sign the death certificates of patients of these reformers, and "near doctors" and alleged public health experts of one kind or another. Two of their other luscious subjects are "child health" and "psychology." Here, again, they can rarely complete a paragraph without sticking a barb in the "family doctor."

Most of them in these and other fields of medical fiction rehash things more centuries old than they themselves are years old, and promulgate them as "new." They love to revel in the idea that prevention of disease is a new subject; that nothing was known about nutrition and other branches of physiology or psychology longer than a few days or weeks ago. They appear to be totally ignorant of real medical history, or if they are not, they are as unspeakably vicious as their writings indicate. These man-handlers of medical truths are finding hard sledding to get their "stuff" over with medical editors, but they are still in clover with book publishers and "news" distributing agencies. Their strong and enlarging forte is in the "free" bulletins given out from clinics, health centers, and various political agencies of government.

There is plenty that is "new" about medicine that ought to be promulgated. Judged from their writings, it is also new to these expert promulgators. There are old truths that ought to be restated, and restated where possible in language understandable by everyone. But why is it necessary to attack the great mass of educated physicians and insult the intelligence of even other intelligent readers of history, in efforts to advance themselves and the more

general understandings of the simple truths of health?

Above all, what sorts of souls, visions or hearts have the few of these medical fiction writers who are doctors of medicine and who ally themselves with and support emotional uplifters and go them one better by attacking their fellows who graduated from the same schools, often in the same classes as themselves, and who are carrying our real health burdens now as they always have carried them?

### SHALL WE PROTECT OR DISCARD "DOCTOR"?

What a confession for a Government to admit its inability to protect against impositions and fraud a title as important to progress as that of "doctor"!

What a miserable compromise with knavishness to attempt to abolish the word "doctor" that is woven by college looms so deeply into the fabric of civilization!

Why in the first place pick upon our college degree of "doctor"? Some people forget that doctor is not a political or other title conferred by the State, but that it is wholly an expression of educational attainment made by universities and colleges, and constitutes the highest degree they award. In this respect, as well as that of usage and understanding, it is only one of several other terms, like "professor," that have been prostituted to a nauseating and disgusting extent.

If our State Government will not protect the use of these terms and not only admit their inability to do so, but frankly attempt by law their destruction, will they be able to succeed? When weeds grow up in the farmer's corn-field, he does not dig up his corn or move to a new field, but destroys the weeds and protects his corn.

We believe that the vast majority of our people, whether themselves physicians, professors, or not, will disapprove any attempt to destroy these appropriate terms which have come to mean so much to so many people. We believe, furthermore, that the majority of our people will support legislation and the enforcement of laws to protect hard-earned titles. At least they will be given the opportunity to do so when the next legislature meets.

Two years ago, after an exhaustive study of the needs of the situation, what was known as the "Medical College Bill" was prepared by physicians and introduced into the legislature by the League for the Conservation of Public Health. It passed the senate and died in a committee of the assembly. That bill will be before the legislature again. It provides that any school or college purporting to teach the healing art and confer any sort of "doctor" degree must comply with certain reasonable requirements. This would stop the output of diploma-mills, whose principal occupation is to issue a diploma with doctor on it, and it would thus correct a situation at its source.

The last legislature passed a law all but unanimously that placed adequate safeguards about "doctor." At least it required each "doctor" to make public his authority for use of the title. This bill